
In Freedom's Birthplace by John Daniels

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South, during the past forty odd years. Written in a lucid and conservative style, it contains a wealth of facts, which if read and understood by the country, would do much to adjust the present abnormal political situation in the South, and to correct many of the false and erroneous opinions, accepted throughout the nation concerning the Negro and the South.

In an interesting, instructive and illuminating manner, *Facts of Reconstruction*, not only answers the questions: Were the Southern reconstructed state governments a failure? Was the influence of the colored citizen in reconstruction injurious? Was the fifteenth amendment to the national Constitution premature and unwise? And was there any rational basis for the fear of "negro domination?", but it sets forth impartially and logically that group of facts which led so rapidly to the political decadence of the South, with all of its solid political opposition to a surrendering North. In connection with the above questions, the book is enhanced with a history of the different policies of reconstruction, the election and the influence of the surrender of Hayes, the causes for the defeats of Blaine, the reason for the failure of the civil rights bill, and the character of the numerous interviews of the author with such distinguished men as Presidents Grant and Cleveland and Messrs. Blaine, Lamar and Gresham, upon the important questions of the day.

But if the book had done nothing else than to show that in Mississippi, where the colored population exceeds the white and where the colored citizen reached highest in political power, the colored people had at no time more than 34 out of 140 members of the legislature, and participated in those reconstructed state governments which put Southern states in harmony with the national Constitution, repaired and rebuilt the public buildings and institutions devastated by war, and planned and organized the present Southern common school system—white and black alike—it would deserve a place in every library of the land.

GEORGE W. ELLIS.

In Freedom's Birthplace. By JOHN DANIELS. Boston: Houghton Muffin Co. 1913. 496 p. \$1.50.

In Freedom's Birthplace, John Daniels has presented to the public a searching and authoritative social study of the negro in Boston. The author brought to this important work the spirit of the investigator seeking the truth, and the scientific method of the student and the scholar. This book is the result of nine years study and

investigation, in connection with social settlement work in the negro-section of Boston, and is vitally important in the light which it throws upon the growing civic problems which the increasing numbers of the negro and race prejudice are forcing upon the great urban centers of the country.

Beginning with the significant services, rendered by the negro in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, the book is replete with a wealth of carefully digested facts and information concerning the Boston negro's physical, economic, social, religious, moral and political progress. The disclosure of the author's remarkable insight and familiarity with so much inside data of negro life and character is partly explained by the author's acknowledged indebtedness to such intellectual colored leaders in Boston as William H. Lewis, Archibald H. Grike, William M. Trotter, Eliza Gardner and others mentioned.

Some of the distinctive merits of the book are its historical and descriptive style, and the closeness with which the writer adheres to conclusions well founded in the facts. Its value is greatly enhanced by a number of biographical sketches of prominent negroes in Boston, statistical tables prepared from the census, and a very convenient index. Logically, the chapter dealing with the economic side of the subject should come nearer the front of the book, rather than near the end, since the economic life is a more decisive and determining factor in the other phases of social activity.

Perhaps, the most serious criticism noted is the author's acceptance of the description of Southern reconstruction as given in the *Encyclopædia Americana*, by James Wilfred Garner, professor of political science in the University of Illinois. This statement of reconstruction is full of detail errors of fact, and the general view is so exaggerated as to amount to a gross misrepresentation of the historical situation, so ably set forth of Mississippi, by Major John R. Lynch in *Facts of Reconstruction*. In the author's conclusion his discussion of the causes of American race prejudice and the growing reasons for its ultimate decline are not only illuminating, but give hope and encouragement to the country for the solution of one of the most difficult and vexing problems confronting American culture and civilization. And in this thought, *In Freedom's Birthplace* is a valuable and scientific contribution to the sociological study of the American negro.

GEORGE W. ELLIS.